

THE
Important Doctrines

OF

Original Sin,

Justification by Faith,

AND

REGENERATION

Clearly Stated

FROM

Scripture and Reason:

And vindicated from the

MISREPRESENTATIONS

OF THE

METHODISTS.

WITH

Remarks on Mr Law's late Tract on the
NEW-BIRTH.

By THOMAS WHISTON, A.B.

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THE
Scripture - Doctrine
OF
Original Sin,
Justification by Faith;
AND
REGENERATION,
Clearly Stated.

1.  HOEVER designs to establish any Doctrine, whether of Faith or Practice, must necessarily keep his Eye directly levelled at Scripture, lest he should miss the Mark of Truth, and wander too far into the Wilderness of Error. We ought to esteem the Scriptures as a grand and noble Repository

pository of all necessary Truths in Order for Salvation, and the less we confide in the Philosophical Inventions of human Reason the better. Notwithstanding this, it may be safely allowed that there are several Points or Doctrines delivered by Word of Mouth, which are not so fully canvass'd in Scripture. *Stand fast, and hold the Traditions which ye have been taught, whether by Word or our Epistle,* * says St Paul. But these at this distant Period of Time are wholly Uncertainties, and not to be depended upon ; however it may teach us a sort of Respect and Veneration for those Writers, who were either Cotemporary with, or else immediate Successors of the Apostles. Consequently we are now to acquiesce in the Doctrines of Scripture alone, and what is either taught there, or may be proved plainly from thence, ought to determine and regulate our Conduct.

2. F R O M hence therefore we are to extract our Account of these great Doctrines, *Original Sin, Justification by Faith,* and the Christian new Birth or Regeneration, and not, as several Writers of late have done, to trust to the Invention of their own Fancies, without any Foundation in Scripture. It seems as if they rather chose to make a new Gospel of their own, than depend upon the old one for Salvation.

I N the following Sheets therefore, it shall be my sole Aim and Endeavour to state these Points without any Partiality or Prejudice to any single Opinion,

* 2 Thess. ii. V. 15.

Opinion, and I hope that I shall have no Byass but that of Scripture and Truth to direct me.

3. As to the Doctrine of *Original Sin*, since it lies first in Order, and upon which the Hinge of our Redemption turns, I shall first treat of it. We have no Room to magnify and exalt the natural Power and Self-sufficiency of Man. These are Abilities Nature never afforded us, but in our primitive State; and if we boast of them now, they are only Fictions and will be conducive to our own Ruin. By too great Debasement and Depravity he is made more like a Machine, and by too much Exaltation more like an Angel than a Man. Let us shun Extremes, for in most controversial Matters, *Truth* generally chuses to keep the middle Path. Man is without doubt by Nature endued with strong Appetites and Passions, though not altogether so strong as to lead him on an involuntary Captive. There must be an innate Principle of Liberty and Agency, otherwise Man would be rendered utterly incapable of a future State. The *Image of God* cannot be said to be wholly obliterated in the Natural Man, he still retains some distant Resemblance to the great Original: Like a beautiful but decay'd Structure, his Ruins are noble and surprizing, and he still spreads Awe and Admiration around him. His original Glory and Beauty are somewhat eclipsed, and obscured, but still his fully'd Features wear the indelible Marks of Power and Distinction: But this is only dwelling upon the general and outward Lineaments of Man, we must descend to Particulars.

We have no Reason to consider *Adam's* Happiness and Glory, but only his natural Immortality in Paradise. Had he continu'd without Sin and in a pure uncorrupted State, we should likewise (as being his Offspring) been Partakers of this divine Property. As soon as ever *Adam* had sinn'd he became mortal, and instead of being possessed of a glorious, he had a frail and corruptible Body. Mortality was the Consequence of Sin, and in this Sense alone it is, that his Posterity are from him originally Sinners. Whatever other evil Consequences can possibly flow from this corruptible and mortal Body, are and must be likewise the necessary Product of *Adam's* Transgression, and are now lodg'd in the *Nature of Man*. This is all that I can discover or determine from St *Paul's* Reasoning upon this Subject. *For until the Law, Sin was in the World, but Sin is not imputed when there is no Law* *. i. e. When there was no positive Law which condemned Men to Death for it. *Nevertheless Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the Similitude of Adam's Transgression* †. Death was not therefore imputed to them upon Account of their own, but for the Transgression of *Adam*. Thus they suffer'd Death, which is the Punishment of Sin, in the same Manner as if they had actually sinn'd; and in this Sense it is, that the Scripture represents them as Sinners.

4. THUS

* *Rom.* v. 13.

† V. 14.

4. T H U S we have found Man by Nature after the Fall to be chang'd into a mortal, corruptible, frail Being, liable to Pains, Accidents, and Diseases, and all the black Artillery of Death. Natural Evil now frequently transcended natural Good, and Life became a Mixture of Happiness and Misery.

W H A T we have hitherto determined belongs only to the Body ; the farther Consequences of this Mortality we shall presently consider. But how far the Soul, which still retained it's incorruptible and unperishable Nature, was affected by this sudden Mutation is extremely difficult to say. How far the *ἀπάτη* or *Deception* of our first Parents might influence it, or how far corruptible and deprav'd Body, now acting upon an immaterial Being, such as the Soul is supposed to be, might change it's Nature, is beyond our weak Apprehension. Thus far we may safely go, that hence sprung the Source of all the Tumults, Disorders and Passions in it; but whether these and a thousand others proceeded from any innate or complexional Depravity in the Soul, or from the malignant Action of a distemper'd Body upon it, will be impossible for us to say, 'till we fully understand what Sort of Connection or Dependence there is, between Soul and Body. For my own Part I am rather inclinable to think, but with all Modesty and Deference, that the Soul and Body from that Time commenced perpetual Enemies. The Power of the Soul then became weak and feeble from the *ἐπιλυπίαις*, or inordinate Lusts of the Body

Body which then warr'd against the Soul. St Paul seems to represent this as the Case, when he says, speaking of the natural and unregenerate Person, *For I delight in the Law of God, after the inward or rational Man**. His Soul approved Things that were good and excellent, but he found another *Law in his Members, warring against the Law of his Mind*. It is no where (at least as I know of) declared in Scripture, that the Soul is by Nature fully'd and contaminated with all that Horror and Darknes, and all those gloomy Passions, with which both the Methodists and Mr *Law* overwhelm it. It seems indeed by Nature, to be confined in a very unhappy Prison at present, and can never fully extricate itself, 'till it receive a more spiritualiz'd and manageable Body hereafter. The Soul, therefore according to my weak Conceptions of this Matter, whatever Guilt it may be supposed to have contracted from *Original Sin*, in a State of fallen Nature, would pass into another World and be rewarded or punished according to it's different Improvements or Demerits in this World. And where there was any positive or natural Law for it to pursue, it must receive it's Portion according to it's Attachment to it. This is all that can be consonant to the Rectitude of the divine Nature. For if such a dark, gloomy Scene of Things were in the Essence of the Soul after the Fall, we could no more conceal or disguise that innate Selfishness, Envy, Pride and Anger, than we could prevent the Sun from shining. But of this more hereafter, when I shall have

* *Rom.* vii.

have Occasion to touch lightly upon Mr Law's Notions.

5. THE grand and indeed the sole Mistake, by which we lose sight of the Truth, is this, that we look upon the Fall as too much respecting the Soul, and too little the Body. To this Body which became mortal by the Fall, it was, that *Life and Immortality were brought to Light through the Gospel*. Had not God originally promised that *the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's Head*, the Body in an unredeemed State, must have remain'd to Eternity without any future Renewal or Restoration, in the same Object and perishing Condition with the Beasts themselves. *Original Sin* must have proved an eternal Death to the Body, unless we admit of the Supposition of a Saviour, and in every Sense with Respect to that, we should have been no more than Brutes. The Body must have for ever been resolved into common Dust. It is through the Blood of Christ alone that we obtain this Resurrection or the Redemption of the Body from it's contracted Corruption. His Death was a Compensation for ours, and he suffer'd in our Nature, and in our stead, to restore us to another Capacity of original Immortality. We should never have been raised again from the Power and Dominion of the Grave: But that Death of the Body which was unhappily thrown upon us through *Adam's Transgression*, would have exercised it's universal Reign over Mankind. This is our natural and unredeemed State as to our Bodies. God indeed created Man to be immortal, and made him an Image of his own Eternity, both with Respect to his Body and his Soul, but after

after his Transgression, his Soul continued immortal and unperishable indeed, but his Body sunk down into a heavy Mass of dissolvable and perishable Clay. Corruption then became his Father, and the Worm his Mother and his Sister.

THUS was the Body fatally deprived of all it's immortal Happiness, and Man was only superior to the Beasts after his Fall in this, that his Soul remained invulnerable by the Arrows of Death. Christ himself by the most inimitable Condescension, underwent that Death which was our unhappy Lot, and re-placed the Body again in the same Possibility of a happy Immortality. These were the eternal Fetters that must inevitably have bound us. Thus is our Condition always represented in Scripture, and the greatest Value is always set upon the Redemption of the Body from Corruption, as if that was the chief End and Design of Christ's future coming. He is to change this vile Body that it may be like unto his glorious Body, according to the Working whereby he is able to subdue all Things to himself*. So again, Ourselves also who have the first Fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of the Body †. Had not the Son of Righteousness thus dawn'd upon us, Mankind must have remained for ever unrestor'd to the united Happiness of Soul and Body, the Happiness of the whole Man. This is the inestimable Value of the Cross

* Phil. iii. 21.

† Rom. viii. 23.

Cross of Christ, in which a Christian ought more especially to glory. And if the Soul consisted of gross and inactive Matter, then the Whole of us must die, and we should only have been Superior to the Beasts in a greater Degree of Perception, Reason and Knowledge.

6. But their Souls as I before observ'd, were of a more durable Existence, after the total Dissolution of the Body they continu'd, and were to be happy or miserable hereafter, according to their different Advancements and Progress in this World. They were still possess'd of fallible Reason, (which it even was before the Fall) had an inherent Power of refusing Evil and chusing Good, consequently were free Agents, and as to their Souls were capable of Rewards or Punishments.

How glorious and how transporting it is to read the Sentiments and Reasonings of the ancient Philosophers upon this Subject, barely from the unassisted Light of Nature ! And what is still more remarkable, since they were entirely void of any Notion of a Saviour, they reason'd right. For in a State of fallen Nature, such as they were in, they justly argued that the Body was the Prison and Sepulchre of the Soul. Their Illustrations of these Points were noble and surprising, considering they had nothing but the pure Light of Reason to direct them, and they wisely asserted and defended the divine Nature of the Soul. The grand.* Enemy and Opposer of Christianity there-

C fore,

* *Celsus.*

fore, since he understood not the Merits of our Saviour's Death, was something more excusable, when he asserts, that " *the Hope of the Resurrection of the Flesh, is the Hope of Worms, a filthy, an abominable and impossible Thing, which God neither will nor can do.*"

F R O M hence therefore any one may take a View of my Opinion of *Original Sin*, that it belongs principally to the Body, and that there is no real Imputation of Sin deriv'd to the Soul, upon Account of which it shall be punished hereafter. It was the promised Seed of the Woman that renew'd the Body again, and restored it to the Happiness it had fatally lost. I shall soon offer my Reasons, why I dissent from the Doctrine of *Original Sin* in any other Sense than this. In the mean Time, let us weigh a little the Opinions of others upon this Subject, and try whether they will bear the Balance of Truth.

7. M R Law it seems and the *Methodists* are of a quite contrary Opinion ; they are for making fallen Man a Devil as to his Soul, as well as a Brute as to his Body : And thus the poor unhappy Wretch must be led blindfold to his own Destruction. The *Methodists* have offer'd nothing considerable upon this Head to prove their Point : They thunder out aloud indeed, that Man is by Nature necessarily damned 'till he enters into a State of Grace. True indeed, so he is as to his Body, but not as to his Soul, which would be repugnant to Scripture, and incompatible with the divine Nature and Attributes. They would understand *Original Sin* in this highest

highest Sense, and I believe in this Sense the Article of our Church upon it is meant.

BUT Mr *Law* enters more deeply into our *original Frame*, and begins with informing us, p. 15. that by Man's being created in the Image of God is to be understood the Image of the Holy Trinity, " where Father, Son and Holy Ghost each brought forth their own Nature in a creaturely Manner." This it seems was a Point reserv'd for him alone to reveal to Mankind. But the following Sentence is a full Answer to his whole Pamphlet, and saps the very Foundation of it, That this Doctrine of the Trinity in the Soul, was never thought of nor mentioned from our Lord's Crucifixion, even to the present Time by any but himself. For unless this Doctrine can be first established, his whole Scheme falls to the Ground ; of which there is not the least Hint in Scripture, nor in all primitive Antiquity. Don't let me here be supposed to argue against the Doctrine of the Trinity, alas ! it surpasses both Mr *Law*'s and my weak Apprehension, but thus far I may safely say, that it seems odd and uncommon, to make the *Christian New Birth* insist upon a Doctrine, that was never fully agreed upon in the Christian Church.

BUT there is still another capital Objection that lies against this Account of the Original of Man's Nature, that upon Supposition there was any such Union in the Soul, yet it is not only inconceivable to us, but even absurd and contradictory to suppose they could ever be separated in the Soul of Man, any more than in the divine

Nature. And the Truth of this Assertion I shall thus briefly demonstrate, and hope that the Argument will afford sufficient Satisfaction to the unprejudic'd Reader. The human Soul as well as the divine Nature is incorporeal and immaterial; for we cannot suppose even the Image of the Trinity to exist in Matter.

If we suppose such a Union as this in the divine Nature, it must exist in the very Essence of it, absolutely unalterable and unchangeable. But all Bodies of the same specific Nature, must be endued with the same essential Properties. Consequently, this Union must likewise exist in the very Essence of the Soul, and therefore to suppose it broken, is to take away the very Essence and Being of the Soul. I am sensible of the other Consequences of this Argument, namely, that if there be such a Union in the divine Nature, there must be in the Human. But however upon this Supposition, Mr *Law's* Argument can never be good, 'till he can prove that this Image can be broken, which he has taken for granted. In what Sense we are to understand that the Soul was created in the Image of God, I shall leave the impartial Reader to consider, who if he thinks at all about it, has no Occasion to dread a Mistake.

8. But this is the best and most excusable Part of Mr *Law's* Book that we have already considered; there are still worse Consequences behind, more unbecoming a Gentleman of his Learning and Character, either to assert or defend. But to proceed, p. 6. he says, " that this Separation

" ration could happen in this created Image of
 " the Trinity, *viz.* that the Birth of the Son,
 " and the arising of the Holy Ghost, could be
 " separated or lost, is also certain, &c." Let us
 therefore allow Mr *Law* all the fair Play imaginable,
 and suppose that this Separation of the Image
 of the Trinity was possible, and then see what will
 be the Consequence according to his own Prin-
 ciples. Let us observe that the Image of God the
 Father had still, according to Mr *Law*, a Being in
 the Soul, and that Man had only lost the Image
 of the Son and Holy Ghost by the Fall. It will
 be worth while to take a short View of the State
 in which Mr *Law* represents the Soul to be after the
 Fall. " It was, *says he*, p. 11. in the State and
 " Condition of the Devils, who in their fallen
 " Nature, are from Flames of Love, become
 " the spiritual, dark, raging Fire-Breath, that
 " can draw no Light of Love into it." And indeed
 throughout the Whole Pamphlet, he reckons fallen Man as to his Soul to be a mere
 Devil. p. 34. he says, " there is in this dark fiery
 " Soul, or fallen Nature, (1.) A restless Selfish-
 " ness, (2.) A restless Envy, (3.) A restless
 " Pride, and, (4.) A restless Wrath or Anger."
 The Nature of the Soul is, if we believe Mr *Law*,
 after the Fall entirely hellish and devilish.
 " Every Life, *says he*, whether spiritual or cor-
 " poreal, consists in Fire, or rather is Fire," which
 is a very strange Piece of Philosophy with respect
 to spiritual Beings, " therefore we may say of the
 " Soul in this State, that it is a spiritual, dark
 " Fire-Breath, an Anger-Fire that must heat and
 " torment itself with its own inward Burning,
 " Strife, &c." I confess I never met with such

Similitudes

Similitudes apply'd to the Soul of Man, and never saw it represented in so shocking and frightful a Manner. And at the same Time how inconsistent and incompatible with his own Principles. For he himself allows, that the Image of God the Father is still resident in the fallen Soul, and yet the Whole Nature of it is in the same State and Condition with the Devils. So that the Image of God the Father and the Image of the Devil are blended together and united in the Soul. This is such a detestable Piece of Prophaneness and Inconsistency, that I am almost ashamed to mention it, but rather wish that a Veil could be drawn over it.

AND indeed, the same Argument lies against the *Methodists*; for it is impossible to separate the Image of God from the Soul, even in it's fallen State, and consequently to affirm that the Nature of the Soul is wholly devilish, is to affirm a flat Contradiction.

9. BUT suppose we should make Mr *Law* still greater Concessions than those already mentioned, yet we shall still behold him like a bewilder'd Traveller, straying out of the Road of Truth, and still incapable of finding his Way. Common Experience not sufficiently instructing us, that there is such a complexional Devil-like Principle, or raging Fire in the Soul, he gives a most dextrous and philosophic Reason, why we don't always perceive it predominant, which has in short no more Connection with the Thing itself, than the Rainbow has to the Moon, p. 11. says he, "The Reason why we don't fully know and

" and perceive our Soul to be in this miserable
 " State, a dark Root of self-tormenting Fire, is
 " this, because the Soul when it was thus fallen,
 " was united to the Blood of an human Body,"
 (which it was likewise I imagine before the Fall,) " and therefore the sweet and cheering Light of
 " the Sun could reach the Soul, and do that for
 " it in some Degree and for some Time, which it
 " does to the Darkness, Sharpness, Sourness,
 " Bitterness and Wrath, that is in the outward
 " Nature." This is Philosophy indeed too re-
 fined by much for my Understanding! so that a
 Man must necessarily be more selfish, more en-
 vious, more proud and more wrathful upon the
 Absence of the Sun. The enlivening Warmth of
 that Luminary, diffuses undoubtedly a certain
 Gaiety and Cheerfulness over the Animal *Œcono-*
 my, but this is entirely separate and distinct from
 those pernicious Passions; this is a new Sort of
 the solar Influence which lay entirely concealed
 from the Reach of *Newton* himself. How much
 better and more advantageous would it have
 proved to his own Argument, to have given that
 as a Reason, mentioned, p. 63. Namely, that
 immediately when the Promise of a Saviour was
 made in those prophetic Words, *The Seed of the*
Woman, &c. then a saving Power or Principle
 was implanted in the Nature of Man. " He put
 " into him a Seed of the New-Birth, the in-
 " grafted Word, by which he received a Begin-
 " ning of a divine Life, a Possibility of being
 " God's Creature again." This may probably
 be true, and the Promise may extend thus far,
 but then ought not this to have been assigned as
 the true Reason, of our not always perceiving this
 diabolical

diabolical Blackness in the Soul: If there was such a Principle engrafted in the Nature of Man after the Fall, surely this may more properly be allowed to oppose, weaken, and frustrate whatever is devilish in it, than the external Light of the Sun, which can never be supposed to have such an Influence, unless we mean to put the greatest Affront upon our rational Faculties. But probably such a Doctrine as this would be easily entertained in a *Roman Catholic* Country, where the *ipse dixit* of a *Clergyman* would have Strength enough to establish it. But I am positive it will never be received among a People who have, and Use the indisputable Right of judging for themselves.

10. I t will never be worth while to consider his Doctrine of *Regeneration* or *New-Birth* established upon such Principles. No doubt but if the Foundation be found so faulty, the Superstructure will be so likewise. But probably I may touch lightly upon some other Parts of it, when I come particularly to treat of this Doctrine. And in short the best Determination that I can give of it is this, that the Whole is one continued Contradiction to Scripture, Reason and Philosophy.

HIS Assertions too are unwarrantable, p. 15.
 " In the Nature of Things, says he, nothing less than this Saviour can redeem them." And again in the same Page. " A Man cannot expect to be saved through the divine Goodness, without the Mediation of the Son of God, when the Birth of the Son of God in the Soul, is the one only Salvation that the omnipotence

"nipotence of God can bestow upon him." To say that *divine Omnipotence* could not possibly contrive any other Means for Man's Redemption, is indeed true upon Mr *Law's* Principles, but when the Falsity of them is so notorious, I hope every impartial Person will judge it a Rashness thus to limit the Power of the Almighty. I confess, 'tis more than I would presume to say, when I reflect upon the unmeasurable Extent of this Attribute. But I am still more shock'd and amazed, when he goes on to inform us, that 'tis beyond the Extent of Almighty Power to *annihilate* the Soul. How mean, how contemptible an Opinion must he have of an All-perfect Being, such as God is supposed to be ! Does not God Almighty act by the very same Steps ; and is not the Progression entirely the same, to create any Being out of nothing, as to reduce any Being when created, to it's primitive Nullity : At the same Time that he denies *Annihilation*, he must deny *Creation* likewise ; for it is the same Act of Exertion in the divine Power. A God that has a Power to create, must by an absolute Necessity be endued with the Power of *Annihilation*. There is certainly a Possibility of solving these Matters, without any supposed Diminution of the divine Power and Perfection. And in short, the Whole Book is nothing but the groundless Assertions of a Man, resolved to say something new, without any Regard to Decency and Truth.

II. HAVING thus finished this necessary Digression, I come now to offer several Satisfactory, nay, even demonstrative Reasons, why I dissent

D from

from the *Doctrine of Original Sin*, in the strict Acceptation of the Article, and why I judge it to mean no more than that Death and Mortality, that was consequent to Mankind upon the Transgression of *Adam*, and those natural Miseries and Calamities attendant upon it.

1. IT is said that *Original Sin* adheres to our Nature, by Imputation of *Adam's* Transgression to ourselves. Well, let us only suppose, that God imputed it to us undeserving Creatures, who had no Share in *Adam's* Fault. And now let us mark the Consequence of so absurd a Supposition. Since it was upon his Account, it must be the same Sin, and not a different one from that of *Adam*; for the Imputation of any Sin, must mean the Application of that individual Sin to ourselves, and not of another. And yet this is an express Contradiction of St Paul's Argument. *Death*, he says, *reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them who had not sinned after the Similitude of Adam's Transgression*. This they must necessarily have done, had *Adam's* Sin been imputed to them. But in Reality, this is the true State of the Case: they were far from sinning, as *Adam* did, against a positive Command. Their Sin was only a bare Infringement of the *Law of Nature*, and therefore their Mortality, as I have before proved, was originally derived from *Adam*.

2. THIS Imputation of Sin from *Adam*, must necessarily make God the Author of Sin. I can easily conceive, how it is consonant to the Goodness of God, that the Merit of Christ's Blood may be applied to Mankind, without any prior

Mer

Merit of their own, through Faith. This is an Act of that abundant Mercy, he always shews to imperfect Creatures, but how he can, consistent with his Justice, without any sinful Action on our Part committed, impute Sin to us, is to me a very inconceivable Doctrine. For my Part, I entertain other Notions of the Deity, as to his Holiness, Justice and Equity : I consider him as a Being, more to be loved for his Mercy, than thus to be dreaded for his Severity. This must needs give us a strange Idea of the Almighty, and must needs introduce many superstitious Fears of his Government of the World. I approve of no Doctrine which favours so much of Cruelty, Tyranny, and horrid Imposition, since God always in Scripture, appeals to Men of the Justice of his Actions, and always disclaims any Arbitrary Method of proceeding.

3. *ORIGINAL SIN* must be in all alike, or not at all. This sad Depravity and Corruption of Nature, this gloomy Darkness, this hellish Tincture in the Soul, must be propagated equally and universally by *Adam* to all, or else to none of his Descendents. This must be a necessary and immediate Consequence ; for it seems a Contradiction in Terms, that this should be spread unequally among Mankind. This is an undeniable *Postulatum*, and the Consequence that immediately flows from it, is this, *viz.* that every Infant must be born with the same unmanageable Passions, with the same Blackness and raging Fire in his Soul, and in short, would in that undisguised State, give the most evident Proofs of it, and we should find the most indelible Marks

Stamped upon him. Now what is more certain than this, that artless Infants, when first the Dawn of Knowledge appears (all other Circumstances being supposed equal) are possessed of this Infection of Nature, in a stronger Degree than others. We find a great Diversity of Passions and Humours, and a greater natural Inclination in one to Evil than another. Some we find with calm and sedate Passions, without any *diabolical Blackness*, whilst others are fierce, outrageous, and impetuous. Now I don't pretend to assign a physical Cause for this Mutation in this Place (tho' I believe it possible) yet whatever the Reason be, it must have been impossible upon the Supposition of *Original Sin*. This I take to be as demonstrative and conclusive an Argument, as any the Mathematics can produce.

4. *ORIGINAL SIN* in the highest Sense, is destructive of human Liberty and the Free Agency of Mens Actions. Liberty of Action is that Principle which diffuses a Divinity round the Godhead itself, the Foundation of all Morality and Religion, and which must necessarily be the constituent Part in some Degree, of every living Creature in the Universe. By *Original Sin*, is meant a Sin absolutely cleaving to, and inherent in our Natures. Since this is the Case, I say, that it is absolutely impossible, for a Man to commit any Sin by a voluntary Choice; for if it be found planted in his Nature without his own Will and *Fiat*, it must likewise for the same Reason necessarily appear in his Actions. If Sin be so inwardly rooted and grafted in our Nature, that the Power of the Soul cannot eradicate it, the Soul

Soul then is fatally acted upon, by the Impulse of the Lusts and Passions, and by this means becomes the Tool of the Body. Hence therefore, it would appear that we are not capable of actual Sin at all, properly so called ; for there can be no such Thing as actual Sin, if the Soul has no physical Power over it's own Actions. We need not be at a Loss to account for the greater part of this Contagion, so universally spreading over Mankind. The general Corruption of the present Age tends to the Corruption of the next, the Prevalence of Custom, the Force of Example, the early Imbibement of Vice, are all joint Causes of the present unhappy Condition of Man.

IT is therefore no Recommendation to the *Methodists* Doctrines, to preach the literal Sense of the Articles to their Audience, they will bear a very easy and tolerable Sense, without all this Rigour and Severity. I wish there was any sufficient Reason and Foundation for this *confident Boasting*. It would ease the Consciences of thousands of honest Men in the World, of a great and almost insupportable Burden. However, I shall only add, that whoever preaches or believes them in the strictest and most rigorous Sense, makes a Man as absolutely passive, in the Work of his Salvation, as a mere Machine is in it's different Movements, all contrived by the Hand of the Artist. Thus far I have placed and represented Scripture in a true and genuine Light ; at least, I have endeavoured to do it. The Doctrine of *Original Sin* being thus fully stated and firmly established, we may more easily build the true Superstructure of *Christianity* upon it.

11. THE next Doctrine that presents itself, and comes under our Consideration, is of all the most difficult, knotty, and abstruse; and that is, *Justification by Faith*: Though I must acknowledge that it has been made so by the laboured Contentions, and modern Disputes of the Learned. In the pure and primitive Times of the Gospel, we find no Controversy as to *Justification*. They never distinguished it from, but rather included it in, the Article of *Remission of Sins*. As I cannot help professing a great Veneration and Esteem for the Writings of those early Ages, when *Christianity* was practised as it was taught, so, to speak my own Opinion, I judge it would have been infinitely better, never to have disputed about this Doctrine at all. It is really worth Observation in this Place, that when any Controversy arises in the Church, as to any particular Doctrine, that the Truth is generally lost in the Dispute: Since the *Christians* in the first Ages, took but little notice of this Doctrine in particular, I think from hence, and from the Language and Meaning of Scripture we may arrive at a just Apprehension of it.

12. I SHALL endeavour to determine the true Nature of *Justification by Faith*, and what we are to understand by it in the Gospel, with the utmost Exactness and Perspicuity. But first, I shall premise some Expressions in Scripture, that bear some Analogy and Resemblance, or that are equivalent to it.

JUSTI.

JUSTIFICATION by *Faith*, is, by St *Paul*, very frequently, and indeed fitly stil'd, throughout all his Epistles, the *Righteousness of God*: Since it is God that justifies, and Man cannot possibly lay any just Claim to it from his own Works, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, it must undoubtedly be more properly stil'd the *Righteousness of God* than that of Man, who were all in a State of Sin and Condemnation. I have no Occasion to point out any particular Passages, since we meet with them so often interspersed over all the Scriptures.

JUSTIFICATION too, in St *Paul's* Epistles, is identically the same, with a bare *Reconciliation* to God, from a State of Wrath. To be in a State of Acceptance and *Reconciliation*, is to be likewise in a *justify'd* State. This is manifestly evident, from these Words; *Much more than being now justify'd by his Blood, we shall be saved from Wrath through him. For if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his Life* *. Here we find that *Justification by his Blood* and *Reconciliation by his Death* are Terms of a like signification.

IT is always represented in Scripture, as a Freedom or Absolution from, a State of Condemnation or the Imputation of Sin. It is equivalent to a Remission of our past Sins, unto a fresh

* *Rom.* v. 9, 10.

fresh State of Acceptance. This is extremely evident from these Words : *Whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation, through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness, for the Remission of Sins that are past, through the Forbearance of God.* We see therefore, whith how great Reason the primitive Christians never consider'd it, as a Doctrine distinct from the Remission of Sins, and thus we see how consonant their Notions were, to the true Purport of Scripture.

13. B U T here it may be proper to remark, that to every Person who weighs Things and Doctrines with an impartial and candid Judgment, it may be plainly discovered, that there are two different Significations of the Terms, *just* and *justify'd* in Scripture.

T H E one is, when a Man is received into Favour and Acceptance with God, by a mere Act of his Grace.

T H E Second is, when a Man is rendered absolutely holy and just before God, and as such is possessed of certain Salvation.

T H E First of these has been the Foundation of innumerable Disputes and Contentions, and Men have been too apt to blend it with the other. The Dispute is here, whether we are *justify'd by Faith alone*, or whether good Works are to be introduced as a Means of our *Justification*. Of our final Justification I make no doubt but they are, and I shall offer a Proof of it, but as to the other, the Determination is *easy*, that we are *justify'd*

justify'd by naked Faith alone, and good Works are by no means to be admitted. This is the *Justification by Faith* always (some few Passages excepted) intended by St Paul, and we readily allow that we are *justify'd* in his Sense, without any Regard to Works past, done under the *Law of Moses*, or that of Nature. We are *justify'd freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ* *. Now it was absolutely impossible that St Paul could ever assert, that either *Jew* or *Gentile* ought to expect any Acceptance or Justification before God, upon Account of any Works they have done under that Law, whether *Mosaical* or *Natural*, since both of them had so grossly neglected and abused those Laws they were under, and consequently could never arrive to any Degree of Acceptance, unless by the *imputed Righteousness of Faith*. But still here's a wide Difference between this Sort of *Justification*, and that by which we are to be judged at the great Day of Account. We must perform the true *Gospel-Covenant of Works* and *Faith* in Conjunction, before we can be absolutely *justify'd* before the Tribunal of Christ. St Paul sometimes mentions *Justification* in this Sense. *For I know nothing by myself, i. e. I don't perceive in myself any Stings of Conscience, yet am I not thereby justify'd, but he that judgeth me is the Lord* †. The true Distinction therefore between these two Sorts of *Justification* is this.

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* Rom. iii. 24.

† 1 Cor. iv. 4.

THE one is only a Remission of our past Sins, whereby we are placed in the Road of Happiness and Salvation, the other is the final Remission of all our Sins, and consequently the Hour of Death is the only Period of Time, in which we can boast an absolute Possession of it.

14. FROM what has been premised upon this Head, it will be no great Difficulty to give an exact Definition of this Justification, which has been so long disputed about, and prove the Truth of it from St Paul's Epistles.

" IT is a free Act of God's Grace indulged to
 " Mankind, without any Regard to their former
 " Works, whereby we obtain an Absolution
 " from our past Sins, and consequently an im-
 " mediate Acceptance and Reconciliation with
 " God."

IT would be too tedious to enumerate all the Passages in Scripture, which may ascertain this Doctrine, a few only shall suffice to prove, that this is the constant Voice and Language of Scripture. *Who have saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our Works, but according to his Purpose and Grace, which was given us before the World began* *. And the very same Doctrine is not only delivered by St Paul, but likewise in other Parts of Scripture. *Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you,*

* 2 Tim. i. 9.

you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins *. The Gospel was offered to all Mankind promiscuously, the Righteous as well as the Wicked. Those who boasted they were righteous, as did the Jews, were far from being altogether so, and the Wicked by Repentance might be baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and thus by the Grace and Mercy of God enter into the same State of Salvation. Thus was fulfill'd that Prophecy of the Times of the Messiah, *Their Sins and Iniquities will I remember no more.*

How many Thousands were there converted to Christianity, and baptized the same Day that they heard the Apostles preach. Was it by Grace or by Works that these were admitted Members of the Christian Covenant? By Works it could not; for the Heathens had liv'd without God in the World, and the Jews were Transgressors of the Law: thus God had concluded all under Sin, and all had fallen short of the Glory of God, i.e. of that Righteousness, which had deserved the Fruition of his Glory. None were ever justify'd barely by Works, only our Lord himself, in whom was no Sin, and who performed the Whole Law. *For not the Hearers of the Law, but the Doers of the Law shall be justify'd* †. How could St Paul therefore assert, that any Man could be justify'd or accounted righteous before God, for his Works, when both Jew and Gentile had transgress'd the Law, and consequently became obnoxious to the divine Judgment? No, By

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Grace

* *Act*s ii. 38. † *Rom.* ii. 13.

*Grace ye are saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the Gift of God, not of Works, least any Man should boast *.*

15. HAVING clear'd up this Point so far, I shall come now more closely to weigh and examine the Reason, Ground and Foundation of this Sort of Reasoning in St Paul, and in other Parts of holy Writ. I must confess indeed, that this Matter has been, in the late Disputes upon this Head, too much overlook'd, though in Reality it was the sole Occasion of all his Labours and Writings of this Kind. I won't affirm that he always directly aim'd at it, yet I believe he always had it in his Eye.

THE Jews we are sensible, had an overbearing Opinion of their own Righteousness, *i. e.* of that Righteousness which came by the Law. They could not bear to think of the Abrogation of it, tho' they had embraced the Christian Faith. The darling Opinion that universally obtained among them, and which they endeavoured every where to establish, was this.

“ THAT unless any Person first embraced the
“ Law of Moses, and became a Profelyte to
“ their Religion, it was in vain for him either
“ to expect *Justification or Salvation.*”

BEING in the highest and most extraordinary Manner possessed with this false Tenet, they were scandalized

* *Ephes.* ii. 8, 9.

scandalized at the Propagation of the *Christian Faith* among the *Gentiles*, if the *Observance of the Law of Moses*, was not inculcated along with it. This as I conceive was the first Contention in the *Christian Church*, and they may not improperly be distinguished into the *Pharisaical and Free-thinking Christians*. Of this latter Sect St *Paul* was a zealous Assertor and Defender, whilst the *Jews* looked upon every *Christian*, who had not by Circumcision bound himself to observe the *Law of Moses*, as still unsanctify'd and polluted. These *Judaizing Christians* out of an excessive Zeal for their Law, dispersed themselves abroad, and insinuated themselves into almost all the *Christian Churches*; they opposed that *Christian Freedom* which St *Paul* preached, with the greatest Violence, and became almost as great Enemies to him as the *Heathens* were. Nay indeed, so sharp was the *Dissention and Disputation* with them, that *Paul* and *Barnabas* were pitch'd upon to go up to *Jerusalem* to determine this Question. And in the Synod of the Apostles conven'd at that Time, 'tis remarkable that St *Peter* delivers in *few Words*, the Whole Doctrine of St *Paul* as to *Justification*. Now therefore why tempt ye God to put a Yoke upon the Neck of the Disciples, which neither our Fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe, that through the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they *. Tho' this Question was carry'd unanimously in that Assembly of the Apostles, in Favour of *Christian Liberty* among the *Gentiles*,

yet

* *Acts xv. 10, 11.*

yet the Contention was far from having a final Period put to it. This gave St Paul just Occasion to write so copiously upon this Head, and in all, or at least most of his Epistles, he was obliged to oppose them with great Resolution. They had crept into every Church where St Paul preach'd, and continued to establish this Doctrine among the Gentile-Converts. *Except ye be circumcised after the Manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved* *. St Paul in his Epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians* more fully treats of this Subject, and sets himself to oppose it with greater Earnestness and Vigour, yet in almost all his other Epistles, we meet with some scatter'd Passages that most evidently point out his Design. The Drift and Meaning of his Discourse in both these Epistles are entirely the same, notwithstanding the seeming Difference between them. In that to the *Romans*, he directly shews the Impossibility of *Justification* even by the Moral Law; in that to the *Galatians*, he more immediately explodes Circumcision, but then it ought to be observed, that by endeavouring to abolish Circumcision, he aim'd at the whole Law, both Moral and Ceremonial; for whoever was circumcised, laid himself under an indispensablae Obligation to observe the whole Law. So that we may fairly and upon the most undeniable Principles argue, that his true Scope and Intention was the same, *viz.* to remove that vulgar and reigning Prejudice from the Minds of the Christian Converts, that the Observance of the *Jewish* Law was absolutely necessary

* *Acts xv. v. 1:*

necessary, in order to obtain a State of Acceptance or Justification with God. This was the first Cause and Foundation of St Paul's Arguments, but afterward he apply'd it in some of his Epistles, as well to the Law of Nature as the Jewish Law. And here the Reason was undoubtedly stronger; for if the Jews, to whom were committed the *Oracles of God*, could not expect Justification by the Works of their Law, much less the Gentiles by the Law of Nature, whose Sanction was not so great, nor the Light and Assurance of it so powerful and cogent. I shall take the Liberty of quoting one Passage at Length, where St Paul is manifestly and confessedly speaking of the Gentile World: *But we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving diverse Lusts and Pleasures, living in Malice and Envy, hateful and hating one another.* But after that the Kindness and Love of God our Saviour towards Man appear'd, not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy he sav'd us, by the Washing of Regeneration and Renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour: *That being justify'd by his Grace we should be made Heirs according to the Hope of eternal Life **.

THUS are we arriv'd to a clear Knowledge of this abstruse and contested Doctrine of Justification, viz. we are justify'd by Faith, or received into a State of Acceptance in Opposition to the Works of the Jewish Law, or the *Law of Nature.*

* *Tit.* iii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

Nature. This is undoubtedly the true State of the Case, and from hence it was that he drew this Conclusion in his Epistle to the *Romans*: *There-*
fore we conclude that a Man is justify'd by Faith
without the Deeds of the Law *. But so far
 was St *Paul* from endeavouring to abrogate the
 Moral Law, that in this very Chapter he disdains
 and disowns it: *Do we then make void the Law*
through Faith? God forbid: Yea we establish the
Law †. His Design was only to shew the *insuf-*
ficiency of it, with Respect to *Justification*.
 Now this Sort of *Justification*, that I have here
 endeavoured to give an accurate a Description of,
 is obtained by Faith alone, in opposition to all
 Works whatever, whether of the *Moral* or *Cere-*
monial Law. Here the divine Grace and Mercy
 became in the most eminent Manner conspicuous,
 by *justifying* all Mankind through Faith in his
 Son, when they could have no Merit of their
 own to boast. To put this Matter beyond all
 reasonable Doubt, I shall offer a short Argument,
 which I own I look upon as strict Demonstration.
 But here let me be understood to speak of the
Christian Covenant, and no other.

NOTHING antecedent to Faith can possibly
justify: for then Man might have been *justify'd*
 of himself, without the Death of our Saviour;
 and thus would the Scandal of the Cross have
 ceased.

NOTHING

* *Rom.* iii. 28.

† *Ver.* 30.

NOTHING subsequent to *Faith* can possibly be admitted for *Justification*; for it seems a Contradiction in Terms, that a Man should be justify'd now at this instant of Time for what is to come hereafter, and which may therefore possibly never happen at all. A supposed Criminal may as well be condemned and executed now, for Crimes that are to be done twenty Years hence, and which may possibly never be committed.

IF therefore nothing either before or after *Faith*, can possibly have any Hand in our *Justification* or Acceptance with God, then the necessary Consequence is this, that it must be the bare Act of *Faith alone*, that justifies us in the Sight of God.

16. THUS I hope to have fully and undeniably proved, that we are justify'd *without any Regard to our Works past*; it was the free Grace of God that here display'd itself, and by which alone we had Freedom of Access to him. But there is yet another great Difficulty remaining, and we are still obliged to determine the exact Signification of the Word *Faith*. Among People that are resolved to dispute every Thing, this is become a various and disputable Word. But with how little colour of Reason I leave the Reader to judge, when the most determinate Sense of it, is pointed out in almost every Page of the Gospel. But only let me be understood to mean as to *Justification*; for in other Parts of Scripture we meet with different Acceptations of it. I shall therefore, with Respect to this Doctrine define it to mean,

A FIRM Assent and strong Persuasion of the Mind, that Jesus is the true Messiah, and the only Saviour and Redeemer of the World.

My Business will be now to prove, that this Definition exactly agrees to the Sense of St Paul, and the Language of Scripture on this Head. A bare Belief in Jesus Christ was sufficient to entitle any Person to Baptism, and whoever was baptized into the Name of Jesus, was undoubtedly at his Baptism, in a State of *Justification* and a Capacity of Salvation. The first Instance I shall produce in defence of this Doctrine, is that of *Philip* and the *Eunuch*. Here, the only proper Qualification that was required, in order to make him a Christian, was a bare Belief that Jesus was the Christ, or the Son of God. *And the Eunuch said, see here is Water, what doth binder me to be Baptized?* And Philip said, if thou believest with thine Heart thou mayest. And he answered and said, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God**. Was this any thing else than a bare *Faith*, and can any Person pretend to assert that naked *Faith* will not justify any Man in the Sight of God? But it is not upon one Passage alone that this Doctrine insists, there are others equally clear and convincing. *The Word is nigh thee, even in thy Mouth and in thy Heart, that is, the Word of Faith which we Preach. That if thou shalt confess with thy Mouth, the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy Heart*

* *Act*s viii. 36, 37.

Heart that God hath raised him from the Dead,
*thou shalt be saved **. I shall beg leave to quote
 one Passage more, where the Doctrine of *Justifi-*
cation, and likewise the same Sense of the Word
Faith, is delivered in the same Manner as I have
 described it, without the least Deviation whatever.
Be it known unto you therefore Men and Brethren,
that through this Man is preached unto you the For-
giveness of Sins, And by him all that believe are
justify'd from all Things, from which they could not be
justify'd by the Law of Moses +. I defy all the
 nice Subtilty and Distinction of Man, to give any
 other true Sense of *Faith* and *Justification*, when
 apply'd to these particular Points that we have
 here examined. There are other Senses of the
 Word *Faith* in Scripture, and which have been
 applied by Men of great Learning and Sagacity
 to this Doctrine of *Justification*, but with how little
 Reason will appear from what has been said.

17. Mr *Law* indeed, construes *bare, naked*
Faith, to mean an entire *Resignation* of ourselves to
 God. We must have no *own Will*, no *self-seeking*, but “ this total Resignation, says he, of my
 “ self to him, is the only immediate Disposition or
 “ Capability of enjoying God himself, with all his
 “ infinite Treasures.” p. 87. If he had asserted,
 that an entire Resignation of ourselves to God,
 was the *Consequence of Faith*, he would have met
 with no Opposition or Dispute. But Men of the
 greatest Learning will be puzzled if they forsake

* *Rom. x. 9.* + *Act. xiii. 38, 39*

the Scripture and trust to Notions of their own. *Faith* often signifies a sort of strong fiducial Confidence in, or Resignation of ourselves to God, an unshaken Trust or Security in his Truth and Providence. As in this : *For we walk by Faith, not by Sight* *. i. e. We have a firm Assurance and Dependence on the Truth of God's Promises. And again : *So that we ourselves Glory in you in the Churches of God, for your Patience and Faith under all your Persecutions* †. Here it may possibly signify, our Resignation to the divine Will and Disposal under all our Trials and Afflictions. We find also || in that Catalogue and Enumeration of the ancient Worthies, that the Word *Faith* has frequently this Signification affixed to it: *By Faith, Abraham when he was called to go out into a Place, which he should after receive for an Inheritance, obey'd; and he went out, not knowing whither he went* **. Here by his *Faith* is meant an entire Resignation of himself and his Fortunes to divine Providence. But to assert that *Faith* and *Resignation* are equivalent Terms, with Respect to *Justification*, is to join Words and Sounds together, which have no manner of real Connection. Whoever firmly and sincerely embraces the Gospel, must by *Faith* give up and resign himself into the Arms of his Saviour, and with a pious Resolution purpose to obey his Commands. But is a Man's own Will, (as Mr *Law* terms it) so vibrated and deprav'd, that it cannot at all contribute to this End? What is our own Will but

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* 2 Cor. v. 7. † 1 Thess. i. 4. ** Ver. 8.

an inherent Power of directing or determining the Mind to act or forbear acting ? It is an innate Power of chusing or refusing Good or Evil, and since our own Will may possibly direct us to the Choice of good, what Reason is there for a total Renunciation of it ? Nor will God Almighty be displeased with us for acting agreeable to our own Will, when it receives this happy and desirable Direction. It is the Principle of Liberty and Self-will within us, that is the sole Cause and *Origin of all Evil*, and consequently it must be the Duty of every Man, wholly to renounce his own Will, 'till he has made that Will subservient to the Laws of God. How therefore must one be surprized and amazed, to hear a Gentleman of Mr Law's Learning and Abilities defend such an Argument as this, that the *Faith* which justifies is nothing but Resignation, and afterward, that such a Resignation is bare naked Faith, when it must be accompany'd with Humility, a Debasement of Soul, and several other necessary Qualifications ? Resignation indeed, as I before observed, must be an immediate Consequence, otherwise our Faith will soon become dead, and by no means productive of good Works.

18. HENCE we are naturally led to point out the Weakness and Absurdity of others, and those not a few, who make *Faith* a complex Term in this Dispute, as comprehending the Sum and Substance of the Christian Religion. For when we enter upon a Disputation, whether a Man is *justify'd by Faith*, or by *Works*, we are to talk of these, as Contra-distinguis'd from each other,

other, and not make *Faith* denominate *Works*, and *Faith* together. This in short is to dispute about nothing, when under the different Sounds of *Works* and *Faith* we arrange the same Ideas. Would St Paul deal so unfairly and disingenuously with his Opponents, thus to puzzle and bewilder rather than convince their Judgments? It was by *Faith* in Opposition to *Works*, that they were justify'd; and therefore to make it a compleat Term, and to signify more than the bare Act, was indisputably the Work of pious, but weak Men. They were only afraid to say that a Man was justify'd by *Faith* alone, lest they should prejudice the Christian Religion. And the Reason was, That they were ignorant of this necessary Truth, that Justification in St Paul's Sense, meant no more than a State of Acceptance with God. I acknowledge indeed, that *Faith* very frequently bears this Sense in other Parts of Scripture, and in St Paul's Epistles, but not in this Dispute, which St Paul occasionally was engaged in with these *Pharisaical Christians*. Passages of this Sort are very numerous in Scripture: *Watch ye, stand fast in the Faith, quit you like Men, be strong* *. Here is meant the whole Body collectively of the *Christian Faith*. And again: *Examine your selves whether ye be in the Faith; prove your own selves, &c.* †. Here *Faith* bears the same complex Signification with the former. It will be entirely needless to quote any more Passages on this Head.

19. THUS

* 1 Cor. xvi. 13.

† 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

19. Thus far therefore as to the Doctrine of Justification the *Methodists* are undoubtedly in the Right, *viz.* that we are *justify'd by Faith, without any Regard to Works past*, *i. e.* God Almighty accepts and receives sinful Man into his Favour, by a mere Act of his Grace. But here St Paul's Argument is at an End, it cannot possibly extend any farther. His Argument was this. "The Works of the Law, says he, are insufficient to *justify*, therefore we may be *justify'd without them.*" But let us only observe how far this Argument would lead us, when apply'd to good Works in general. "Good Works are of themselves insufficient to *justify*, therefore we may be *justify'd without them.*" And therefore how absurd and monstrous is it to stretch this Argument beyond it's designed Limits, unless we resolve to turn downright *Antinomians*. *Faith*, when it has once placed us in a salvable State, must be no longer alone, but in order to keep us in that *justify'd* State must necessarily admit of *good Works* for it's Companion. In the following Part I shall endeavour to establish this fundamental Article :

THAT both *Faith* and *good Works* are really distinct Considerations, and that both are a *fine quâ non* to our final Justification. Or to explain my meaning more plainly, that after our Admission into the Christian Covenant we are under the Obligation of two separate Laws, The *Law of Faith* and the *Law of Good Works*.

THIS

THIS is the Truth of the Gospel, and whatever differs from this unerring Rule, must be a mistaken Opinion. That we are *justify'd by Faith, without any Regard to Works to come*, is utterly false and impossible : It can have no more to do with *Works to come*, than it has with the Revolution of the Planets. And yet these are the flagrant Absurdities that the *Methodists* avow and defend.

20. THIS one single Argument will be sufficient to satisfy every unprejudiced Enquirer after Truth, that unless we look upon St Paul's Justification in this Light, and which was really, (as shall soon be proved) all that he intended by it, we must necessarily make the Scriptures inconsistent with each other. It will be out of the Power of human Invention to make the Epistles of St Paul and St James agree. St Paul assures us, that we are *justify'd by Faith* : St James, that we are *justify'd by Works* : How therefore can we ever reconcile this manifest Difference between them, and yet we must allow that both these Assertions are strictly true. The only possible Solution is this : One speaks of Works done *before Faith* and the Works of the *Jewish Law*, and the other of Works done *after Faith*, and our becoming Christians. This is absolutely a necessary Concession, and if so, then in the Sense of St James, good *Works* are conducive to our final Justification with God.

AND that St Paul meant no more than this by Justification, and did not at all intend to derogate from the Merit of good Works, is evident from the Objections that were raised against this Doctrine in his own Times. *What shall we say then ? shall*

we continue in Sin, that Grace may abound. “ Is this, says he, the Consequence of my Doctrine of *Justification* that we should continue in Sin, regardless of good Works? No, God forbid that this should be my meaning. Did I mean this, it would be directly opposite to our Christian Profession; for Baptism itself delivers good Works in a Figure and Emblem to us: *We are bury'd with him by Baptism into Death: that like as Christ was raised up from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should Walk in newness of Life *.*” These were the Sentiments of St Paul, and thus Baptism was esteemed by all the Primitive Christians as a Type of our good Works. But,

Secondly, We may shew from the very Nature of the Christian Covenant, that good Works are and must necessarily be co-essential with *Faith*, in order to the Attainment of Salvation. When our blessed Saviour entered upon his divine Office, he began his preaching among the *Jews*, who had before received a Revelation of God’s Will. Their Law is justly distinguished into the moral and ceremonial. The first (for we may omit the latter) was the essential Part of their Religion, and contained those immutable Laws of Morality, which are and must necessarily be eternally obligatory upon Mankind; and at all Times and in all Places, wherever God Almighty vouchsafes a particular Revelation of his Will, this must be the Substance of it, otherwise we must suppose him to act contradi-

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* *Rom. vi. ver. 1, &c.*

ctory to his Nature and Attributes ; for God is eternally *of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity.* When therefore our blessed Saviour began to preach, as to the moral Part of it, he did not so much introduce a new Religion, as refine and rightly explain the old. So far was he from endeavouring to abolish the unalterable Laws of moral Righteousness, that he almost made it the whole Business of his Life to correct their gross Explanations of it. From hence therefore I deduce this undeniable Proposition,

THAT the moral Law of the *Jews* is still obligatory upon us Christians ; and that as it was the Substance of their Religion, so it must be likewise of ours, and consequently it must be the essential Companion of Faith in the Work of our Salvation.

THIS Doctrine is delivered in the seventh Article in much the same Manner, that altho' the ceremonial Law of the *Jews* does *not bind Christian Men*, yet no Man is freed from the Obligation to that Law which is called moral. If therefore we meet with any Contradiction to this Doctrine, in the eleventh and twelfth Articles of *Justification* and *good Works*, in their literal Acceptation, what shall we conclude ? — If these Articles manifestly oppose Morality considered as a Law, I should be glad of a satisfactory Solution to these seeming Difficulties.

OUR Obligation to perform *good Works* is previous to any *Faith* whatever, and is by Nature unalterably grafted and interwoven into the Body of

of the Christian Faith. If we regard the eternal Rectitude of Things, and design not to subvert the fix'd and demonstrative Notions we have of God and his Attributes, we must necessarily allow, that every Religion which comes from God, must have it's Foundation in *good Works*. Consequently the Form of those Words must displease serious Christians *. That *Good Works done before the Grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of his holy Spirit, have in them the Nature of Sin.* A very great Degree of Imperfection undoubtedly adheres to our weak Performances, but so far as the Works are good and proceeding from a true Principle, so far must they be pleasing and acceptable to God. *For we are his Workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them* †. Whatever a learned || Commentator may suggest here of ηύας being understood to προνοιμασε I take these Words *before ordain'd or prepared*, to belong to good Works, and that they shew our antecedent Obligation to perform them. This is the natural Sense of the Words, without any Force put upon them.

Thirdly, FAITH and good Works in Scripture, are always considered separate and distinct Articles. We meet with no such Language as this in Scripture, that good Works are nothing but a Mode, Consequence and Production of Faith, or that we are under the Obligation of no Law but that of Faith. I say it is a sufficient Objection to any such Opinion, that this is a Language entirely

G 2 unknown

* Art. xiii. † Eph. ii. 10. || Dr Whately.

unknown to Scripture, and the first Ages of the Gospel. I believe I may safely affirm, that if one Passage in Scripture can be brought in Defence of this Doctrine, I would readily embrace it, and depend only on the Merit of Faith for eternal Salvation; but if this Doctrine has no real Foundation, I hope I may be allowed to depend upon my Works, as well as my Faith. A few Examples will place this Matter in a clear Light. *And now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity, these three, but the greatest of these is Charity* *. The Virtue, Merit and Efficacy of Faith, is here determined to be less than that of Charity. It seems to me an odd sort of reasoning, to say, the greater is produced by the less. Does not St Paul exhort us to hold *Faith and a good Conscience*; which some having put away, concerning Faith have made Shipwreck†. And in the subsequent Chapter ||, *Holding the Mystery of Faith in a pure Conscience*. He does not say that Faith is productive of a good Conscience, which he ought to have done according to their Principles, and I believe we can meet with no Expressions of this kind throughout the whole Canon of Scripture. St Paul indeed exhorts the *Ephesians*, above all to take the *Shield of Faith*, but at the same Time he is commanded to put on the *Breastplate of Righteousness* **. And again, to his beloved *Timothy*: *But thou, O Man of God, flee these Things, and follow after Righteousness, Godliness, Faith, Love, Patience, Meekness* |||. Here is one material Point to be observed in these two forecited Passages, that by Righteousness is not meant

* *I Cor. xiii. 13.* † *I Thess. i. 19.* || *Ver. 9.* ** *Eph. vi.*
|| | *I Tim. vi. 11.*

meant the *Righteousness of Faith*, but that Righteousness which proceeds from ourselves; and consequently if regularly and vigorously pursued, will be in some Sense meritorious. *Faith* here is considered only as a single and distinct Qualification, and therefore it will be easy to prove the unpardonable Folly and *Enthusiasm* of that Assertion, "That we are subject to no Law but that of Faith." And this will likewise appear from the plain Consequences that attend such an Opinion.

B U T first give me leave to remind you of a notorious Contradiction in Mr *Law*, p. 69. he says, " there is no difference between Faith and Works " in this inward new-born Man. It's Faith is it's " Works, and it's Works are it's Faith.— So that " Faith and good Works are only two Considerations of one and the same Thing." This is of a Piece with the rest, and only requires mentioning in order to point out it's Weakness.

21. WHOEVER asserts, that we are under no Law but Faith, must necessarily be guilty of *Antinomianism*. I am sensible that they laugh at and explode it, and call it an ignorant Slander. But however the Truth of this Charge I shall here briefly demonstrate. *Antinomianism*, in the strict Acceptation of the Word, signifies thus much,

To inculcate the Law of Faith, in Contradiction and Opposition to the moral Law, or the Law of good Works.

L E T us only examine their Principles by this Rule, and we shall find this Charge to be strictly true.

true. They boast indeed of their Practice of good Works, and perhaps with Truth on their Side. But how ? Not as a Law, but only as the Mode and Consequence of Faith. So that our Obligation to perform good Works, considered as a moral Law, is really nothing. Good Works by them are only considered as consequential to *Faith*, and flowing only from that Law. Whoever owns his Obligation to practice the moral Law or the Law of good Works, must consider it as a Law in itself, abstracted from, or without any productive Dependance on any other. I have here impartially stated the Case, and if they would prove themselves to be unworthy of this Aspersion, they must allow that in Christianity there are two distinct Laws, One of Faith and the other of good Works. When therefore they recommend good Works, they recommend them not from any intrinsick Obligation we have to pursue or practice them, supposed as a Law, but only as a necessary Mode of Faith. *Antinomianism* therefore may justly be laid to their Charge ; though Christian Charity and Truth oblige me to say, that it is *Antinomianism*, not in the worst but in the most favourable Sense whatever.

Secondly, SINCE according to their Principles we have no Law but Faith, we must from that Law undoubtedly receive our Trial at the universal Judgment of Mankind. For (whatever the *Methodists* may think of it) it seems inconsistent with the divine Wisdom and Justice, to condemn or acquit us by any Law, which we have no Obligation to perform. Can we be judged, or can the Judgment be stil'd impartial when that Judgment is

is to be made from a Law which we have not. And yet it is the universal Voice of Scripture, that we are to be judg'd according to our Works and not according to our Faith. God will render to every Man according to his Deeds, or his Works *. Every Man shall receive his own Reward according to his own Labour †. And again : For every Man shall bear his own Burden ||.

FROM hence therefore I deduce this undeniable Position, that according to their Method of Reasoning, there can be no different Degrees of Happiness to the Righteous in the next World. Jesus Christ, say they, must be our whole Justification, he must be *all in all*, and we nothing of ourselves. So fatally do they pervert and misapply that Text : *But ye are wash'd, but ye are sanctify'd, but ye are justify'd in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God* **. Our own is a negative Virtue, Merit, Righteousness, &c. We have nothing of our own, it is all from Jesus Christ. Our total Reliance therefore on his Merit, when our own is of no Signification, must make us all *equally Righteous*. For although we allow there may be different Degrees, Measures and Proportions of Faith, yet the Merit of Christ, and his Satisfaction for Sin, being applied equally to all, must place us all upon an exact equality, in his future Kingdom of Glory. And then what will become of God's Justice and Veracity on the one Side, and the Scripture's on the other.

MR Law

* Rom. ii. 6. † 1 Cor. iii. 8. || Gal. vi. 5.

** 1 Cor. vi. 11.

MR Law runs into the opposite Extrēam, and as much repugnant to the Truth and express Language of Scripture. He informs us, that the *Blood of Christ* was not shed to deprecate the divine Anger or to satisfy his Justice, which important Doctrines both Scripture and Reason loudly testify, but to quench this Wrath, this self-tormenting Fire in the Soul. p. 48, 49. "The Wrath of Man, which was awakened in the dark Fire of his fallen Nature, may in a certain Sense be called the Wrath of God. —— And it was solely to quench this Wrath awakened in the human Soul, that the Blood of the Son of God was necessary. — This was the Wrath, Vengeance, and vindictive Justice that wanted to be satisfy'd, in order to our Salvation." What Weakness and Absurdity is this, without any Foundation in Scripture! But he loves to explain Things in a new Manner, and place them in a new Light, whether there be any Ground for such an Explanation or not.

T H U S I have finished what I intended upon this Head, and hope that no one will so mis-interperet my meaning, as if I thought, a firm and hearty Belief, that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour of the World, will have no Influence upon our future Actions. A true Faith is a very strong Motive to produce them, and any Person who is fully possessed of this Persuasion, and yet leads a dissolute Life, must necessarily contradict the Dictates of his own Reason and Conscience. He allows that Jesus Christ is the only Means of Salvation, and the only Name vouchsaf'd to Mankind

kind for that important End, and yet absurdly disowns it in his Life.

I SHOULD be glad if every one was as fully satisfy'd of the Truth of what I have here offer'd, as I am myself; but if they still dissent from my Reasons, and are resolv'd to think me in the Wrong, let 'em be so charitable as to pity my Endeavour to find out the Truth.

22. THE last Doctrine that I propos'd to treat of, comes now under Consideration; and that is, what we are to understand by the great Christian Doctrine of *New-Birth*, or *Regeneration*. It gives me I confess a very great Shock and Surprize, to find Men of great Reputation, both for Learning and Piety, widely mistaking the true Nature of it. Mr Law has bestow'd a whole Pamphlet to inform us *what it is not*, and I hope the few following Pages will satisfy every impartial Christian *what it is*.

OUR Blessed Saviour never affected any unusual Forms of Expression, any mysterious quaintness in his Discourses with the Jews. And particularly as to this Doctrine of the *New-Birth*, the Jews themselves had a Form of Speech, or Custom similar to it, so that it raises our Wonder the more, when we find Nicodemus so ignorant of our Saviour's Meaning. The Words of our Lord were exactly consonant to the Jewish Method of baptizing their Profelytes. Every Person who embraced their Religion and renounced Heathenism, became, according to their own Confession, as a new-born Infant. His former Life and Con-

versation were to be entirely forgotten ; he was to enter upon a new Course, and be chang'd as it were into a new Creature. When our Blessed Lord therefore discoursed to him about these Matters, he might easily have perceived the Similitude between the *Jewish* and the *Christian* Doctrines. But surely some Reason may be given why *Nicodemus* understood the Words of our Saviour in so childish a manner, as if they had been meant of a real and actual Birth : And the true Reason I take to be this, he was a *Jew* and a *Pharisaical Teacher*, and consequently as such, looked upon himself already as the Child of God, as having no need of Repentance, as Heir of the Kingdom of Heaven, as already born from above, and possessed of every Qualification requisite for that End. To talk therefore of any Spiritual Life from above, (for that the Greek Word $\alpha\gammaω\epsilon\nu$ truly signifies) to a *Pharisaical Jew*, seem'd the highest Absurdity ; and hence it was that he so readily took it in the literal Sense. I am positive many of us are guilty of as great Misapprehension about it, as *Nicodemus* himself. We are told by an inspired Apostle, that *the Wisdom of Man will be found Foolishness with God* ; and indeed if I may freely declare my Opinion, we make use of our own fallible Reason too much in the infallible Word of God. We ought to be highly cautious of any Determinations of this kind, lest they should prove wide from Truth and Scripture, and we should thus be found guilty of false Philosophy and vain Deceit. I apprehend no great Difficulty in the Determination of this Doctrine of *Regeneration*, unless Men are resolved to make Difficulties of their own, by depending

depending too much upon the Delusions of Fancy. But of all that ever treated of this Doctrine, not even the *Methodists* excepted, Mr *Law* has represented it in the most unscriptural manner. It would appear disadvantageous to Christianity, if such a Doctrine as this should lye conceal'd from our Knowledge, when without a right Apprehension of it, *we cannot enter into the Kingdom of God* *. We seem to labour under greater Misfortunes, and to be placed in a more unhappy and melancholy Situation, than those mentioned by St Paul. *He said unto them, have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.* †

23. THE first Thing that deserves Observation upon this Head, and which appears in some Measure to have escaped the Writers in this Controversy, seems to be this; *The Kingdom of God* mentioned, *John iii.* where this Matter is most fully handled by our Saviour, does not primarily belong to Christ's future Kingdom of Glory, but to his visible Kingdom upon Earth, or the Gospel-State. This Phrase, as likewise that other of the Kingdom of Heaven, frequently bear this Meaning in Scripture, and have no immediate Reference to the future State of the Blessed. This Sense is so obvious in a great many Passages, that I have no occasion to quote any at all. It is really worth our Observation, and particularly in this Place, and will be found one great means to clear up the Truth of this Doctrine. For want of a

* *John iii. 3.* + *Acts xix. ver. 2,*

due Apprehension of the Sense of this Phrase, what mistakes Men of great Learning have made in this Matter: So that the direct Purport of our Saviour's Words is really this :

“ **T**HAT no Man can possibly become a
“ true *Christian*, or a Member of Christ’s King-
“ dom, till he is *New Born* and *Regenerate*;
“ and that as soon as ever he is made a true
“ *Christian*, he is really and truly *Regenerate*.
“ These always accompany each other, and are
“ always inseparable.

THIS being rightly stated and apprehended, we may come more closely to the Matter in Hand, and consider what our Saviour means when he says we must be *born again*, or *from above*. When *Nicodemus* so foolishly misapply’d, and misunderstood his Words, our Lord explains and exactly paraphrases them *, and in this Verse is contained the full Sense of our Saviour, and the whole Truth of this contested Doctrine. *Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* Now to every sincere and impartial Enquirer, who pursues Truth with desire to attain it, this Doctrine lies plain and evident. The whole of this matter is visibly contained in a right understanding of the Phrase — *To be born of Water and of the Spirit*: Whoever apprehends the true Meaning of those Words, has attained to the Knowledge of

* Ver. v.

of this great *Christian* Doctrine. Are not the Words plain and express? Can they be at all doubtful in their Meaning or Application? And are they not a direct Explanation of being born again? Let us therefore examine these Phrases separately, and we shall have no Room to doubt of their Purport and Intention. *To be born of Water* we are well assured, and likewise have the unanimous consent of the Church upon it, that it means no more than the Baptism of *Water*, which is a very significant Emblem of the *internal Baptism*, and *unction* of the Holy Ghost. Baptism of *Water* itself, was stil'd in the first Ages of Christianity $\pi\alpha\lambda\iota\sigma\tau\varepsilon\nu\sigma\alpha$, or *Regeneration*; it is call'd also in the Gospel *Illumination*, though in Reality it was only the outward Symbol and Laver of both. Baptism therefore ought to be esteemed as a necessary and scriptural Part, or rather Rite of *Regeneration*. *To be born of the Spirit* (of which Baptism is only the outward Representation) is the internal Influence and *unction* of the Holy Spirit upon the Soul; and this may justly be intitled the higher Baptism. Having thus explained the Terms, what it is to be born of *Water* and of the *Spirit*, there can be no great Difficulty to determine this Question. Whoever is possessed of the *internal*, as well as the *external Baptism*, has acquired both the necessary and immediate Qualifications of the *New-Birth*. From that Point of Time must he date his Spiritual or *New-Birth*, in the same manner as the actual Birth of an Infant takes its Denomination from that Moment it is released from the Womb, and enters into the World. As the natural Birth is justly dated from a fixt and certain

tain Period of Time, so must the Gospel Birth bear a strict Affinity to it in this Particular. If we take it in any other Sense, how can it with any Propriety of Expression be stiled a Birth, when, if we give Credit to the Opinions of some, a *Christian* is never fully born during his whole Life: The Scripture Sense therefore of *Regeneration* must necessarily be this,

“ That no Man can be admitted as a Member
 “ and Partaker of the Blessings of our Saviour’s
 “ Gospel, unless he be washed by Baptism, the
 “ Laver of *Regeneration*, and receive the Unction
 “ of the Holy Spirit. ”

As our natural Birth is the first Period, or Beginning of our natural Life, so our spiritual Birth must likewise signify, the first Period or Beginning of our spiritual Life. This is to place Things in the clearest Manner, and to shew how just the Parallel is between our natural and our spiritual Birth, and the Significancy of our Saviour’s Allusion. Thus every true *Christian* is born anew; thus the Kingdom of God is opened and revealed to him, and he is endued with a Power of making what Growth or Progress in it he pleases. Every *Christian*, upon the Profession of a firm and hearty Faith in *Jesus Christ*, at the Time of his Baptism participated of this *New-Birth* in the first Ages of the Gospel; *for we are all baptized into one Spirit*, and at that Time the *New-Birth* received it’s divine Original in the Soul. This matter has been so oddly handled of late, and so strangely misunderstood, that I wou’d willingly dwell a little the longer upon it, in order to rectify Men’s Notions in this Affair, and I think the Birth,
 Growth,

Growth, Progress, Sickness and Health of the spiritual Man, may be easily illustrated by that of the natural.

THE spiritual or *New-Birth* derives it's Date from that Point of Time when any Person is made Partaker of Baptism in all its Senses, as the Birth of an Infant is determined to be at that very Point of Time it is released from the Womb. The Truth of this I shall thus briefly demonstrate.

When an adult Person (for I speak of no other) was baptiz'd, he was either made a true *Christian*, and was entituled to all the Blessing of the Gospel, or he was *not*. To say he was not, is to contradict the express Words of our Saviour and condemn those Means by which he has commanded us *to enter into his Kingdom*. And to say he is made a true *Christian*, is to own the Point in Question; for every true *Christian* must be in every Sense regenerate.

THE immediate Effect and Consequence of this Birth in the Soul, is a Sense, Feeling and Taste of spiritual Things; *for that which is born of the Flesh is Flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit*. The things of the Spirit must be spiritually discerned, there is an immediate Renovation and Change in our depraved Wills, Appetites and Affections, as the Infant presently arrives to a Sense and Understanding of natural Things, and by Growth and Progress continually increases it's Knowledge.

HENCE we perceive how palpable is the mistake of those, who say that *New-Birth*, as it is applied in
the

the Gospel, means no more than a total Alienation of our Thoughts, Wills and Affections, from the Lusts and Passions of the Flesh, to the spiritual Duties of the Gospel: Whereas it is manifest, from what has been already said, that this Change in our Minds is not *Regeneration* itself, but the necessary Effect of it. Such a Temper and Habit of Mind is absolutely requisite for the Continuance of the *New-Birth*. Whoever looks into the true State of his Soul, will find that these are the Operations of the Holy Spirit, as consequential to our *New-Birth*; he will find it correcting bad Desires and improving good Ones, always guarding and protecting the Soul from the Approaches of Sin. If we quench not it's Motions, and do not oppose it's Dictates, the Power of the Spirit wou'd still keep us in that regenerate State, and still feed the spiritual Life in our Hearts.

25. But the spiritual Life after we are *New Born* may have it's Sickneses, it's Refluxes and gradual Decay, as the Lamp of Life in the natural Infant may be gradually and totally extinguished. The spiritual Infant or the spiritual Man may dye, and his spiritual Health be occasioned by the withdrawing of God's holy Spirit from his Soul. These are all evident Truths, and plain to the meanest Capacity. when any *Christian* is thus spiritually dead, then he sinks into his former unhappy Condition. St Paul very elegantly describes Persons of this Sort, * He represents them as *having their Understanding darkened*, as being *alienated from the Life of God*, as being

past

* *Eph. v.*

last feeling, as having given themselves over unto *Last-civiousness*, to work all uncleanness with Greediness *. Where the Works of the Flesh are still manifest, where our carnal Affections still remain unconquered, where our vicious Inclinations are still predominant, there our old Man is still uncrucified, the Body of *Sin* remains undestroyed, we are then become *unregenerate* again, still confined under the Yoke and Slavery of *Sin*. To these we may apply again those Words of St Paul, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the Dead and Christ shall give thee Light* †. Like *Esau*, he may lose his *Christian Birthright* and the *last End* and Condition of that *Man is worse than the first*. St Paul has an Eye to the dangerous Precipice such a Man stands on. *It is impossible for those who were once enlighten'd*, i. e. baptized, and have tasted of the heavenly *Gift*, and were made Partakers of the *Holy Ghost*, and have tasted the good *Word of God* and the *Powers of the World to come*, if they fall away, to renew them again unto *Repentance* ||. Thus the bare Name of *Christ* may remain without any saving Knowledge of him: For as by the Death and Sufferings of *Christ* and a lively *Faith*, we obtain a Reconciliation with God and a State of Acceptance, so by the Power of the holy Spirit and it's Operations on the Soul, we become capable of our final *Sanctification*.

THE Reason why under the Dispensation of Grace in the Gospel, the Spirit of *Sanctification* was thus pour'd into our Hearts, is, because weak, impotent and unassisted Nature, wanted a Guide to conduct her, and to change her inordinate Passions, and then help her forward in the glorious Progress of eternal Happiness; to make her subject to the Law of God from being subject to the Law of *Sin*; for St Paul assures us, that *they who are in the Flesh cannot please God*, i. e. in a State of Nature without any divine Assistance: And when once by Baptism

* *Eph.* iv. 18, 19. † *Ibid.* v. 14. || *Heb.* ii. 5.

tism the Holy Spirit has acquired Admission into our Souls, and we are spiritually born, we have the Power of growing in Grace, increasing in our spiritual Warfare, and going on to Perfection. Our Liberty is by this Means heightened, our Faculties enlarged, our Conceptions exalted; and that which flows from the Spirit, observes and pursues the Motions of the Spirit. The happy Fruits of obeying the Spirit in this exalted Degree, is the Performance of all the spiritual and excellent Virtues of Christianity. *For the Fruit of the Spirit is in all Goodness and Righteousness and Truth **. St Paul himself points out the direct Sense of this spiritual Growth till we are arrived to a spiritual Manhood. *Till we all come to the Unity of the Faith, and the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man. i. e. The Manhood of the spiritual Life, unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fullness of Christ †.*

IN short, the Operations of the Spirit upon the Soul, may not improperly be compared to a good General, who sometimes retreats and sometimes maintains his Ground, though once baffled, still renews the Charge, and never leaves the Field till he finds the Battle entirely lost.

THUS are we come to a perfect Knowledge of this Doctrine, and find the *New-Birth* to be the Source or first Principle of the new Creature, and upon which that is afterwards built: And likewise we are sensible of the only possible Means to preserve this Principle alive in the Soul, *viz.* After our Admission into the *Christian* Covenant, to live under a constant Sense of the Influence of the Spirit, and to frame the Actions of our Lives agreeable to his Presence.

In the same metaphorical Sense as we are said to be *new-born* in Scripture, we are said likewise to be *created in Christ Jesus*. We are to dye with Respect to our former Lives and Conversations, and are to undergo

* Eph. v. 9. † Ibid. 13. iv.

dergo as it were a new Creation. Hence is it that we are so frequently stil'd new Creatures: *For we are his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works* *. We are commanded to put on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness †. The new Man throughout the Gospel means no more than One who is led by the Directions and Power of the Spirit, to the Practice of the Christian Virtues: One who lives in the Spirit, walks in the Spirit, and is led by the Spirit; who conquers his fleshly Appetites, and governs his unruly Passions and Affections by the Aid and Influence of the Spirit: *Ye have put on the new Man, which is renewed in Knowledge after the Image of him that created him* ||. The old Man bears just the opposite Signification to this in Scripture. It means One who has not yet renounced his former Course of Life, which he led before he was baptized and regenerate; who still continues to gratify those unlawful Lusts he practiced when remaining in the Darkness of Heathenism. *They that are Christ's have crucified the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts.* Hence we are exhorted in Scripture to put off the old Man, i. e. the former Man before we were converted to Christianity, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts, and to be renewed in the Spirit of our Mind **.

27. THE Foundation of all these Difficulties is the great Difference between adult and infant Baptism. The former of these only obtained in the first Ages of the Gospel, and, I think, it ought to be wished that we had still followed the Practice of the primitive Christians in this Respect. Baptism in adult Persons must always, if we believe the Gospel, be accompanied with Regeneration or the New-Birth. Every one must then be instructed in the Principles of his Christian Profession first

* Eph. ii. 10. † Chap. iv. 24. || Col. iii. 10.

** Eph. iv. 22. 23.

before Baptism; he must confess that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, and that through him alone he expects Salvation. To believe that *Jesus* was the true *Messiah* and Saviour of the World, was an Article absolutely requisite to qualify them for that sacred Ordinance. St *Paul* observes, that *no Man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed*, so likewise no one can acknowledge *Jesus* to be the *Christ* unless by the Spirit of God. Therefore of Course, as the Holy Spirit must needs assist their Belief, so likewise the Unction of it must be a necessary Attendant upon Baptism, and consequently every Person who was taught the Rudiments of the Gospel at the Time of his Baptism, was really *new-born* and regenerate. So that every adult Person immediately became a Member of *Christ's* Kingdom, and was entitled to all the future Blessings and Promises of his Gospel. He was at that very Time *born both of Water and of the Spirit*, and consequently was entered upon his new State. We need not wonder therefore, that we meet with so many Expressions in Scripture declaring the great Efficacy of Baptism, since it was only typical of the higher Baptism of the Spirit. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved* *. It is, as St *Peter* thought, the necessary Method of Admission into the *Christian* Covenant. When *Cornelius* sent for St *Peter* to receive a more full Satisfaction in the Principles of the *Christian* Faith, and whilst St *Peter* was opening the mighty Mystery, they all received the Unction and miraculous Effusion of the Holy Spirit, and consequently if ever the Baptism of Water could be judged unnecessary it must be then, when they had before received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. *Then answered Peter; Can any Man forbid Water that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we. And he commanded them to be baptized in the Name of the Lord.* * This was the constant

* *Mark* xvi. 16.† *Act.* x. 47, 48.

constant Sense of the first Ages as to these Matters, and the *New-Birth* (a few miraculous Cases excepted, and from which no just Argument can be drawn) derived it's Date from the Period of Baptism; they were baptized into the Spirit and from that Instant of Time they were spiritually born.

28. But if we only reflect what a great Difference there is between *adult* and *infant Baptism*, we shall be no longer at a loss to know how Men have puzzled themselves about this Doctrine. It is now no easy Matter to know when a Man is *New-Born*, unless we wholly acquiesce in the Church's Opinion, that our *Regeneration* is to be dated from our Baptism. I wish we had any direct Argument in Scripture to establish such a Doctrine upon. But however, if any Person will undertake to prove from Scripture that Infants are capable of *Baptism*, I will undertake to prove they are capable of *Regeneration*. But thus far I may venture to say, without any Apprehension of Danger, that the *New-Birth* is actually formed in any Person, at the Time when the Holy Spirit has vouchsafed its divine Unction. Thus would it be now if any adult Person was baptized. Faith in Jesus Christ, and a hearty desire to embrace it, must precede his Baptism; he would be baptized into the Spirit, and the Power of the Spirit would accompany his Baptism, and then would he receive his *spiritual Birth*.

29. I CAN'T help observing what Mr *Law* has determined upon this Point, which is entirely contrary to the Scripture Doctrine I have here delivered. According to his Account of this Matter, the *New-Birth* is never actually formed in any Christian. For P, 76, he says, " Was the " *New-Birth* ever really finished in any one, he " would be as certainly in Paradise as *Adam* was; " and be as much above the power of the Ele- " ments of this World as *Adam* was at his
" Creation."

" Creation." And again, " *Regeneration* is
 " not to be considered as a Thing *done*, but
 " as a State that is progressive, or as a Thing
 " that is continually *doing*." The Operations in-
 deed of the Spirit in the Formation of the Spir-
 tual Life, are gradual and progressive, because
 they must be consistent with the moral Agency
 of Man's Actions ; but the *New-Birth* itself, must
 be actually formed in any Person before he can
 possibly become a Christian ; so that according to
 Mr *Lew's* Principles, no one can ever claim any
 Title to the future *Recompence of Reward*, because
 there is no Point of his Life in which he can be
 properly called a Christian. But,

Secondly, *Regeneration* consists in the Union of
 the Image of the Son of God to the Soul, or is
 the Birth of the Son of God in it ; and in this,
 says he, the inestimable Value of our Redemp-
 tion consists. The Image therefore of the Son of
 God, is by his Death again united to the Soul,
 or it is not. Upon Supposition that it *is*, then,
 agreeable to his own Scheme, we are placed in
 Paradise in the very same State of *Adam* himself :
 This I suppose, no one will presume to assert.
 If it is not, then we still continue in a reprobate
 and unredeemed State, and are still in that dark
 devilish Situation in which he represents us. But it
 seems he has a safe Retreat from this Argument, it is
 " a Thing that is continually *doing*," it is continually u-
 niting : This is in other Words to say, that Christ has
not redeemed us, but is *continually redeeming* us : But
 I hope that he won't call this Scripture, when our
 Redemption is always mentioned as a Thing *done*
 and not continually *doing*. I would only ask him too,
 whether he met with the least Traces in Scripture,
 that to be *Born of the Spirit* signifies to be *Born*
 of the Son of God. One Passage I remember may
 possiby lead the Ignorant to dream of this new
 Union. *Know ye not that Christ is in you*, except

ye be Reprobates. But this must mean by the Union of Faith; for Christ is said to dwell in our Hearts by Faith *

30. We dont find any necessity in the Gospel for any preternatural Influences or miraculous Effusions of the Holy Spirit, in order for our becoming *regenerate*. And the only Error of the *Methodists* in this Point, seems to be this, that they take the *extraordinary*, for the *ordinary* Operations of the Spirit. I do not find any inward Feelings, sensible Experiences, and such like, to be absolutely requisite for our *New-Birth*, nor indeed to me at least do the Operations in both Cases appear to be similar. To feel the Holy Spirit, properly speaking, is a miraculous Effusion of it. As when it descended in a Bodily Shape, and *cloven Tongues appeared, like as of Fire, and sat upon each of them,* it then undoubtedly acted upon the whole Animal Frame, had an extraordinary Influence upon their Body, and they properly felt it. But these Effusions were poured out, for the divine Light, and Conviction of the Religion of our Saviour, and to confirm and ratify its Truth. The Holy Spirit was not thus feelingly communicated to all, nor probably to half those Christians, who were baptized even in the Times of its miraculous Influence, and yet they were really *new-born*, if they liv'd a Life suitable to their Christian Profession. To say they were not, is to affirm that they were still in a damnable State. *The Manifestation of the Spirit was given to every Man to profit withal,* for the uses of Teaching, Prophecying and Edification, and for the Proof of their divine Authority. To suppose any sensible Operations of the Spirit, must suppose it to act primarily upon the Body, and these will be expressed in a miraculous manner, in involuntary Raptures, and pious Agitations. But there is nothing

thing of this required to qualify us for *Regeneration*. The Influence of the Holy Spirit in this Case is primarily on the Soul, and therefore when *Spirit* acts upon *Spirit*, to talk of Feeling, it is to talk of Impossibilities. How therefore must we distinguish these from the wild Delusions of a disordered Fancy, unless they are productive of the same Miracles, or are convey'd for the same divine Purposes. The ordinary Effluxes of the Spirit are only perceiveable from their Fruits and Effects, and therefore to feel the Spirit, is not an ordinary but extraordinary Method of Conveyance. When therefore the *Methodists* boast of these *inward Feelings*, and yet disclaim and disown any extraordinary Impulses of the Spirit, they talk of express and evident Contradictions; and yet this is the constant Distinction they make, and they are always for defending the *one*, and disowning the *other*. When the Impulses of the Spirit on the Soul are great and surprizing, still the Soul has no inward notice of it, but from that divine Glow, that rapturous Ardour of Love to Jesus Christ, and Devotion to God, *i. e.* from its Effects. Feeling is generally used in Scripture in a spiritual and metaphorical Sense, some few miraculous Cases excepted. It now raises the Soul to the more noble Services of divine Adoration: Inspired by it we pour forth our humble Souls with a fervent Zeal to that Saviour who redeem'd us by his Blood, and raised us to a lively hope of a happy Immortality. As a Consequence of its Abode in us, we perceive an extraordinary Change in our depraved Wills and Affections, a growing Distrust to earthly, and an eager Fondness for heavenly Enjoyments.

HENCE I cannot help observing their false Representation of that Parallel, concerning the Operations of the Wind and the *Holy Spirit*: *John iii.*
 " We feel the Wind, say they, in itself, not in
 " its

" its Effects merely." To state this Parallel right, we ought to observe, that our Saviour there speaks of *bearing*, not of *feeling* the Wind, which he ought to have done according to their Doctrine. *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou bearest the Sound thereof, — so is every one that is born of the Spirit.* We shall find this Similitude, rightly stated, to be a flat Contradiction to their Doctrines. " As we hear the Sound of the Wind, and yet cannot tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth, only by its Effects; so likewise we perceive by our Understanding the Force and Power of the Spirit, although only discernable from its Effects." This they must allow to be the true Parallel, unless they can prove that our Saviour talked of feeling the Wind by its Sound.

31. As to the manner in which the Holy Spirit operates, it is entirely beyond the reach of our finite Capacity. *Body* acts upon *Body* by Contact, but how *Spirit* acts upon *Spirit*, or even *Matter* upon *Spirit*, is impossible for us to define: This we may be well assured of, that in all the Impulses of the Holy Spirit upon the Mind of Man, it dictates but seldom compells; heightens, but rarely supersedes the Power of Liberty. By this means we are less liable to abuse that Liberty the Almighty hath indulged us, which is undoubtedly its utmost Perfection. But never to err, and partake of this Perfection in an infinite Degree, is the Property of that Being who enjoys the most transcendant Pitch of Glory; therefore with what Reason has Mr *Whitefield* asserted that the Holy Spirit " appeals to the Understanding, but over-rules and forces the Will*?" I am positive that this Doctrine is wholly unscriptural, and he would have talked more agreeable to true Christianity had he asserted just the Reverse; that the Holy Ghost over-rules, conquers, and as it were

were hurries away the Understanding by an extraordinary Light and Conviction, and then the Will would become a voluntary Consequence of the last Judgment of the Understanding. There are no such extraordinary Feelings and Compulsions required for the *New-Birth*, nothing but the secret Workings, and unfelt Admittance of the Spirit. Whoever expects or talks of *Regeneration* without the Influence and Inhabitation of the Spirit, only gives an ample Testimony of his slender knowledge of Scripture. *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. If any Man defile the Temple of God, them shall God destroy; for the Temple of God is Holy, which Temple ye are* *. I chuse to explain this Text of the indwelling of the Spirit in the Soul, rather than of the visible Church of Christ, because of the great Resemblance it bears to another in the same Epistle, which is manifestly meant of it. *Know ye not that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you* ||.

To conclude upon this Head, I must confess of them as St Paul did of the Jews, *I bear them Record, that they have a Zeal of God, but not according to Knowledge* ||. I rather pity then despise them, and think they will sooner be conquered by gentle then severe Methods. They glory in their mistaken Notion of Persecution, and their false Affectation of Apostolism. St Paul has given us a sort of Rule to walk by in this Respect: *Some indeed preach Christ even of Envy and Strife, and some also of good Will—What then? Notwithstanding every Way, whether in Pretence or in Truth, Christ is preached; and I therein, do rejoice, yea and will rejoice* **.

32. FROM the foregoing Principles, let the Wicked tremble at the damnable State they are in, who

* *1 Cor. iii. 16, 17.* † *Cor. iii. 6, 19.* ‡ *Rom. x. 2.*

|| *Phil. i. 15, 18.*

who produce none of the happy Fruits and Effects of the Spirit. The spiritual Life can never be long consistent with a Life of Wickedness. A good Christian ought to be govern'd and actuated by the Spirit, and to live in Contradiction and Opposition to it, is *to grieve the holy Spirit of God, whereby they are seal'd unto the Day of Redemption.* They ought every Moment to be struck with Horror, when they are thus separated, thus alienated, thus become Reprobates from Christ. Let them reflect that they are carrying on and doing the Work of the Devil, and what miserable Wages will they be obliged to receive for their Labour; *for the Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God is eternal Life, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.*

32. I CANNOT dismiss this Subject, without observing another Sense of *Regeneration* in the Gospel. However this makes no Alteration in the Doctrine I have before established, because with us *Regeneration* or *New-Birth* are Terms that bear the same exact Meaning. What I have before delivered of the *spiritual New-Birth* or *Regeneration* is strictly true, tho' the Word *Regeneration* itself is sometimes used in another Sense. It is not to be there understood of a *spiritual* or *figurative Birth*, but of a literal and actual Revival of the Body from Corruption. But this is not that *New-Birth* we have before enquired after, but only the assured and certain Consequence of our preserving ourselves to the End, in that spiritual State or Birth we have entered into in this World. That I do not represent the Sense of the Word *Regeneration* unfairly, may be gathered from Matt. xix. 28. when rightly pointed and distinguished.

And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, (in the Regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the Throne of his

bis Glory) ye also shall sit upon Twelve Thrones, judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

HERE *Regeneration* is not to be understood in the same Sense as the *New-Birth* or *Regeneration* mentioned by our Saviour *John* iii, from whence the *New-Birth* is to be derived and stated, but as I before observ'd must be referred to a literal Restoration of Life, *i. e.* either to the general Resurrection, or rather to the Millennium, when Christ is to reign upon Earth over the Saints, for a thousand Years after the Dissolution of the present Form of it. I make no Doubt but this latter Opinion is the genuine Sense of the Text I have quoted from St *Matthew* and consequently that *Regeneration* in this Passage, is to be applied to the first *Resurrection of the Dead*, or to the supposed *Millennium* *.

IN the same Manner as we have determined about the *Christian New-Birth* or *Regeneration*, must we likewise determine of Adoption. There is the greatest Resemblance and strictest Affinity between the *New-Birth* and the *Adoption of Sons*. A Man at the same Instant of Time that he is *spiritually born* or regenerate, receives his *spiritual Adoption*, or Right of Sonship. *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the Sons of God* †. The Birth of the Spirit in the Soul, is at the same Time the Author of our *Regeneration* and *Adoption*, and by a regenerate Man is meant exactly the same as an adopted One. And yet it seems highly requisite to make a just Distinction in this Matter, that we may rightly apprehend it. *Adoption* likewise in the Scripture is represented as a Thing future, as being equivalent to, and of the same Signification with the *Redemption of the Body*. *And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-Fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of the Body* ||. Whatever seeming

* *Rev. xx. 5.* † *Rom. viii. 14.* || *Ibid. v. 23.*

seeming Contradiction there may be in this, to the foregoing Doctrine I have endeavoured to defend, it will upon a strict Examination be found to be none at all, unless we resolve to prove a Contradiction in Scripture itself. The Scripture likewise informs us of our Adoption already past, and yet all this without any Contradiction to itself. *For ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father**. It may seem odd therefore not only to weak, but even to some thinking Persons, that we should *have received the Spirit of Adoption*, and yet are still said to wait for it.

THE Solution of this Query is obvious.

His spiritual Adoption, as well as his spiritual New-Birth, every true Christian has undoubtedly received, at the Time when the Holy Spirit is first vouchsafed and communicated, and by which they are entitled to the second and future Adoption, if they continue to persevere in the Practice of the Christian Faith. By the other is meant our literal, glorious and final Adoption, which will be evident and conspicuous to the Eyes of the whole World, which can be known only at the Time of the *Redemption of the Body*; for by the Holy Spirt of God, we are said to be *sealed up unto the Day of Redemption*. This Sense St Paul delivers in the most exact manner: *For the earnest Expectation of the Creature waiteth for the Manifestation of the Sons of God*†. This therefore is exactly analogous to what I have proved concerning New-Birth or Regeneration which is literally accomplish'd in the actual Reviviscence of the Body.

33. I CAN'T help concluding with a most hearty Wish, that the Doctrine of the Millennium was more universally known and believed among us, for the Reign of Christ a thousand Years upon Earth with his Saints, is built upon a stronger Foundation

* Rom. v. 15.

† Ver. 9.

Foundation in Scripture than any abstruse Doctrine I know of. If indeed Men merely in Compliance with received Opinions, are unwilling to embrace any new Doctrine; the plain Consequence is this, that we must always continue contented with those we have at present, we must yield an implicit Faith to them, and shew a blind and implicit Dislike to all others that can be proposed. I shall therefore give an Argument from Reason, which will greatly corroborate the Testimony of Scripture, with Relation to the Doctrine of the *Millennium*.

THIS Earth was designed for a Paradise, or Place of uninterrupted Felicity to *Adam*, which he was to have enjoyed (I suppose) a thousand Years before his Removal from it.

BUT by the Fall, *Adam* and his Posterity became Mortal; and thus the original design of God in the Creation seemed to be frustrated.

BUT Man by the Redemption of Jesus Christ, was restored to a Possibility of regaining all his original Happiness, otherwise our Redemption can never properly be said to be entirely completed.

IF therefore we draw a just Parallel between our original State in Paradise, and our *Redemption*, we must allow the Possibility of regaining the original State we have lost.

CONSEQUENTLY, since this can never be done but by admitting the *Millennium*, or Reign of Christ a thousand Years upon Earth with his Saints, this Doctrine must necessarily be admitted. No one I think can explain *Rev. Chap. xx*, *Matt. xix. 28, 29*, and the parallel Passages in *St. Mark* and *St. Luke*, &c. in any other Sense. To me they seem the clearest Evidence that can possibly be afforded,

